

特別掲載

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Six Keys to Education

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【付記】2014年5月27日、日本教育大学院大学「次代の教育を考える」の授業内で、Mr. Jeffrey Charbonneau (National Teacher of the Year 2013 / 2013年度全米最優秀教員) が特別講演をして下さった。本稿は、その講演の記録である。Mr. Charbonneau は、アメリカ北西部ワシントン州ジラ市にあるジラ高校（公立）の化学、物理、工学（STEM）の教員である。ご本人の快諾を得て、本紀要の投稿原稿の種別としてはカテゴリー外ではあるが、掲載させていただく。

【要旨】 “Six Keys to Education” ～教育における成功のための6つの秘訣～

Six strategies that will lead students to an educational paradise

教育的楽園に生徒を導く6つの戦略

- 1) Today is the most important day for every one of my students. (今日という日がすべての生徒にとって最も重要な日。)
- 2) Allow students to experience failure, but do not allow failure as a destination. (生徒に失敗の経験をさせるべきですが、失敗で終わらせてはいけません。)
- 3) All students are ours. (すべての生徒は、私たちの共有の生徒。)
- 4) We create solutions. (私たち教員が解決策を作り出す必要がある。)
- 5) We seek and give help. (周りからの助けを求め、助けを与えよ。)
- 6) Create a culture of high ambition and leading by example (高い志に基づく文化を築き、見本となつて示せ。)

Thank you so much. On behalf of the National Teacher of the Year Program and the nearly 3.3 million public school teachers in the United States of America, I would like to thank you for opportunity to be here tonight. It is an honor to be here, surrounded by so many others who are dedicated to advancing education for our future generations. Thank you.

Over the course of this past year I have traveled more than 300,000 miles to meet with those who are interested in educating our futures. During that time I have gained a lot of perspective on the state of education in the United States.

There are some that will point to international test scores. Some will look at graduation rates. Others will look at college enrollment numbers or a nation's gross domestic product to determine the level of success of a nation's schools.

However, I have a problem with each of these indicators. And I have found that most teachers and parents do too. I have a 7 year old son and a 4 year old daughter. My son is in his second year of public school, while my daughter will be enrolling this fall.

What I want for my own children, should be the same as what I want for all children. That has led me to ask myself on many occasions: what is the goal of education? Some would say, it is to learn subjects such as language, literature, science, math, or a technical trade; maybe you would say it was about the performing or visual arts, history or civics. Certainly those are fine answers to give when asked what should be *taught*.

The problem is; that's not really the goal of education. I think it is about something very different. Before I give my answer, I would like to try again – with a slightly different question - What is the single most important thing you learned in school?

I say again, the one, single, most important thing you learned in school. Odds are it was not a formula, a vocabulary term, or sentence structure. Chances are it was not how to solve for a variable in math, how to tell the difference between the parts of a sentence, and most likely it was not the names and symbols of the elements on the periodic table.

For each of us, I will grant that it was probably something very different from one person to the next. Though most likely it was something that you learned about yourself. Perhaps you learned how to organize. Perhaps you learned how not to procrastinate. Perhaps you learned humility, strength, compassion,

self-sufficiency, or how to rely on others. Whatever it was - I am willing to bet it was not a subject that was listed on your report card. You see - that's the secret to education.

Education is not about the subjects in books, web-pages or lectures - it is about the subjects in the seats. Students in our classrooms are there to study themselves - to learn about themselves - their talents, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

I claim that our most important job then, what we teach, is not the content – it is not about facts, figures, diagrams, or procedures. Our most important job, is to develop positive relationships with students that foster an increase in their self-confidence and self-awareness.

When I was a small child I was given an incredible gift. Simply put, I was taught to believe in myself. I was taught that there was no such thing as too hard. Unfortunately, not everyone has been given the gift of self-confidence. That is why I teach. I teach to give students belief in themselves. The harsh reality is that it is much easier to talk about increasing confidence in others than it is to actually do it.

So I repeat. What is the goal of education? What do I want for my own children? It is to give students confidence in themselves and their abilities to overcome the obstacles in their lives. But how does one teach confidence? Learning to have confidence in yourself is an incredibly complicated task.

I claim that we can do it every day, for each of our students, by creating something I like to refer to as a teaching paradise. In my classroom, I welcome my students to class the same way every class period of every day. I say very simply, “Welcome back to another day in paradise.”

I know it sounds like a cliché – but clichés are rooted in reality – they are derived from an ideal that are still worth striving for. Paradise is about building positive relationships with students before all else. That means that content is secondary. Connecting with your students – learning about them as individuals who should be celebrated for their similarities and their differences is the primary goal.

Teachers, be genuine in your interest in their backgrounds and utilize the information you learn about them in your lessons, as appropriate, to increase the relevance and impact of those lessons. Once those relationships are built with students, they will work hard for you. By having high expectations for what your students can do – in fact setting the bar higher than even you expect them to reach – you give them an opportunity to show what they can really do.

The surprising thing about making content secondary and relationships first, is that you will be able to teach to a much greater depth, with more rigor than you ever expected. By creating positive relationships first, we can create a safe community where students and teachers alike are willing to push themselves further each day – and that is what education is really all about.

Anyone can be successful in any field that they so choose. Anyone. I firmly believe that all individuals can and will be successful if given the opportunity, the support, and the confidence they need.

We teach students from all backgrounds and all abilities. Often I find that my best students are ones whose academic histories would have suggested otherwise. Why do these students succeed classroom? The answer is actually pretty simplistic.

When students walk through the door, I seek the positive in them first. I place my students as my absolute first priority. Content comes second. By learning first about my students – their history, culture, current ability, future goals, activities, etc, I am able to modify my instruction so that they can see the relevance of what they are learning in class to the things that matter to them in their lives.

Once that connection is made, it is the students that drive the instruction. They push me to show them more, and then I step to the side and allow them to do the work. Ironically, by placing positive student relationships before content in my priorities – we are studying subjects to a much deeper level; content rises when relationships come first.

The interesting part of it is that while I am a science teacher, my job is not necessarily to teach the next generation of scientists – it is to teach the next generation! With confidence gained in my science classes, my students have gone on to transfer that confidence to other areas of their lives.

While I am incredibly proud of my former students who have gone on to become pharmacists, nurses, and computer and mechanical engineers, I am equally as proud of those who became musicians, accountants, and beauticians.

There is nothing more important in education than establishing a positive relationship among students, staff, parents, and administration. As a teacher, this means ensuring that while I need to challenge my students, I also need to challenge myself to continue to improve every single day.

The reality is that paradise cannot simply be found. Paradise is not stumbled upon. It is not waiting for us to find it. A teaching paradise must be built, maintained and improved each and every day. It requires sweat equity, triumphs over adversity and consistent, positive attitudes. In paradise we remove the words “can’t,” “too hard” and “impossible” from our vocabulary.

There are six strategies that will lead students to an educational paradise:

1) Today is the most important day for every one of my students.

You can be the best educator in the world for 99 days in a row, but with a single ill-timed comment you can lose a student’s respect, cause a student to lose academic focus and possibly taint an entire subject for a student. You must be great every single day, or you may lose your students in an instant. Today is the most important day!

How many times have you heard – “I never did like math...” which is then followed a few minutes later by “I had this math teacher that once said...” – Think back on your own schooling. Was there a teacher, or other adult in your life that caused you to not like a certain subject? If so, you can probably remember a specific phrase or time that they caused you to feel this way. It only takes one moment to lose a student.

What great educators realize is that not only is every day important, but every comment, remark or look can cause a ripple effect that may follow that student for the rest of their lives.

Therefore, we must make it our number-one priority to be encouraging to every student, and every person we interact with. The alternative choice is far too damaging to allow. By making today the most important day in our students lives, we will teach with a refined focus and dedication that will do nothing but improve not only our students, but also ourselves.

2) Allow students to experience failure, but do not allow failure as a destination.

The skilled educator ensures that their courses are really difficult to complete with an “A”. The best courses are extremely rigorous where in order to earn a high score, students must become masters of the subject. They must demonstrate higher order thinking and be effective communicators.

I do believe that very few students should earn a solid “A” in all of their courses. In fact, failure –

momentary failure – should be encouraged! I want to see each one of my students have to grapple with challenging material to the point that they are not successful on every attempt. Remember to find value in those momentary failures. I teach some really challenging courses. There are many, many days where students have difficulty grasping the concepts quickly.

If in reviewing their work I only pointed out what they were doing wrong, morale would be destroyed. Instead I look for the positive. I look for what they did correct, what they did that showed a link to prior learning, and what they did that was a creative (even if incorrect) solution to the problem.

Students learn that being right from the start is not the goal. In short, the fear of failure is reduced, and confidence in the learning process is increased. I am a very content-driven teacher; however, I have done my job if my students learn more about themselves and the process of learning than they do about electrons.

Far too often teachers try to teach a difficult concept while making comments like, “oh it’s easy, you just do this...” While I understand the intent is to make the situation seemingly less stressful, the opposite actually occurs; students lose confidence. Ask yourself how you would feel if you were struggling and someone kept telling you it was easy? So I take a different approach– I admit that the work is hard.

Describing the energetic changes that occur during the Born-Haber process – and explaining where those energies come from – is a complex task. When my students accomplish it, they have a reason to celebrate because they tackled something that challenged them.

We need to train our students to not flee from “difficult and hard situations.” So I choose to identify those situations as such. By admitting that the material is difficult it allows them the emotional leeway to fail on their first attempt if needed; while at the same time challenging them to improve their grit and ultimately learn the material.

Fundamentally, students need to learn what it feels like to tackle complicated scenarios and emerge with new understanding. The next time they are faced with something difficult they know what to do.

By ensuring that my students know what it means to fail, they learn how to respond to failure, make modifications and improve. Momentary failure ultimately leads to success. However, we as educators are there to meet them in their moments of need. As a team of educators we ensure that students do ultimately succeed. Excellent schools have support systems in place to assist students who need extra help. These

teams of counselors, librarians, administrators, and support staff all need to be working together to provide the best possible experience for our students.

Great educator teams outright refuse to let students say “I can’t” and instead work with them until they say “I did”.

3) All students are ours.

All of us share in the responsibility to teach children – every single one of them. While I may officially only have 110 students on my roster throughout the day that does not mean that they are my only students. You must teach all children as though they may one day become a member of your family. They just might!

I have only been in one fight in my life. It was in the 6th grade and lasted less than a minute. Ironically, one of my best friends, Matt, and I had been arguing just as we entered the classroom. We each threw a punch and were then separated by the substitute teacher, Mr. Fred Bower, and sent to the administrative office.

Fast forward a few years, as an 11th grader, I asked out a cute young lady on date. When I went to her house to pick her up, there standing in the front doorway was Mr. Fred Bower. I froze momentarily. I wondered if he remembered. Then he said, “Hi Jeff, how’s your friend Matt these days?” Turns out we both clearly remembered the fight. He allowed me to take his daughter on a date that night. Five years later, he allowed me to marry his daughter, Monika.

The moral of the story – you must teach students as though they are members of your family – they just might be one day! Always remember to give your students a “Fresh Start”. While knowing a student’s background is absolutely essential in getting to know their strengths and weaknesses, I want to learn about their background from them, not from others.

In the classroom this means that I do not look at previous grades or test scores for at least the first week of class. This allows my students to make their own first impression – rather than my perception being influenced otherwise. Once that first impression is made, then it is time to bring in the historical data to help guide the strategies that I will use with that student.

Remember to teach all students as though they are yours – as though they are members of your family – and as is with my own case, as though they may just save the life of your child as my three former students did

when my own daughter was born. All students are ours.

4) We create solutions.

Almost all schools have limited funding. Almost all teachers would love if their students were better prepared coming into their classrooms. There are many reasons to complain about various aspects of education around the globe. However, it is time to stop complaining without offering up solutions.

Rather than lament the troubles that plague education, we need to be actively creating solutions and encouraging the implementation of new strategies and techniques. As education policy is created we need to empower teachers and educators to be able to use their leadership skills to the fullest. These individuals know what their students need – they are skilled and work with our youth on a daily basis.

Parents, we need to trust our teachers to create educational solutions for our children, just as we trust our nurses and doctors. Teachers, I challenge you to match each of your complaints with a solution.

Imagine what your schools will look like when there are solutions available to the issues you have! However, I have to caution against the desire to seek out simple solutions. Children are incredibly complex individuals with varied needs. The ways in which we educate them needs to be as unique as they are.

5) We seek and give help

We all need help. I am the National Teacher of the Year from the United States of America, and I need help. I do not have all the answers. Not even close. I need help constantly. I need help daily from my coworkers, my students, and their parents. You have to be willing to seek out help.

You have to be willing to give up the idea that one person can know everything. We have to be willing to seek out the help from others if we are to improve our instruction, communication, and ultimately improve the lives of our students.

Teachers, administrators, and parents all need help from one another. Each has part of the answer of how best to educate each child. We need to find new ways to increase cooperation and support among each of these groups so that each one is empowered to seek out help.

That means that you must also be willing to give help when needed. Veteran and beginning teachers alike have skill sets that can help others. In essence, we should be treating teachers like students. Seriously. Principals and fellow teachers should be modeling proper instruction, motivation, and group dynamic techniques when they are working with their staff.

When we start teaching each other the same way that we are teaching our students, we will empower each other, teach others how to lead, and will ultimately end up with a highly effective staff. Just, as great teachers get the same results from their students.

We do not just educate the students - instead we too have become the students and our peers our own educators. We share lessons, navigate paperwork together, and help to strengthen the education world by leading our own professional developments.

6) Create a culture of high ambition and lead by example.

We expect a great deal from our students. They should strive for academic excellence, be involved in some kind of extra-curricular activity, work their first jobs, and also be involved in their community.

We lead our students by example. We pursue advanced certification, master's degrees, and other professional development. We work to improve education outside of our classrooms by participating in school, district, and regional advisory boards.

But more importantly, during the process of engaging in our own professional development, we involve our students by making them active members in this process. Teachers need pursue new ways to ensure that learning is relevant to their student's lives. This means that students will never have to ask "when am I ever going to use this", because you are already asking them to show you it is relevant.

Lessons include projects that utilize the new concepts and ideas so that students can see a direct relationship between the learning outcomes and their lives. When students see relevance in their education, they are much more likely to be deeply engaged.

In essence, students can see through our actions that we do not believe that we are ever finished learning. At the end of the day, these six key strategies define great teaching –

- 1) Making today the most important day
- 2) Allow students to experience failure, but do not allow failure as a destination
- 3) All students are ours
- 4) Create solutions
- 5) We seek and give help
- 6) We create a culture of high ambition and leading by example

These keys all have one thing in common. They teach our students overcome obstacles. Every child has obstacles that they must overcome. Statistics will tell us that some of our children are more at risk than others. While true, I firmly believe that all children are at risk if we do not teach them how to overcome the obstacles placed in front of them.

Think back at your own path in life. Regardless of your background, there were pivotal moments that changed your life. There were obstacles that you had to deal with. Granted some face larger barriers than others, but we all face them.

We need to teach our children how to respond to these obstacles, how to overcome them. Fundamentally, our students must learn what it feels like to tackle complicated scenarios and emerge with new understanding.

By following the 6 keys, we can reach our goal: teaching students to overcome obstacles so that they may gain confidence in themselves and their abilities. If we do not change our focus away from the things that are not important, then we will lose a grasp of the things that are.

It is my hope that we as a global society will continue to improve the education systems of the world so that one day, my future grandchildren will live in a society where they are proud to know and work with their local and global neighbors.

Thank you.